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OF THE

HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY

OF HIS

BIRTH

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Peter Cooper

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TO ALL PUPILS

OF

THE COOPER UNION

THIS BRIEF MEMOIR

OF ITS

FOUNDER'S NOBLE LIFE

IS INSCRIBED

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PREFATORY NOTE

It has been deemed fitting in commemoration of the one-hundredth anniversary of PETER COOPER'S birth, to narrate briefly in the following pages, the story of his noble life.

Some future biographer, recognizing the grandeur of that life, will erect a worthy monument, but this slight memorial is the production of men and women who have enjoyed the privileges of MR. COOPER'S most useful foundation — it is the tribute of gratitude to his memory.

Thanks are due to those who have facilitated access to books and papers, and to those who have given other assistance and advice.

WM. F. BELLER

CLASS '82

"Formed on the good old plan,
A true and brave and downright honest man!
He blew no trumpet in the market place,
Nor in the church, with hypocritic face
Supplied with cant the lack of Christian grace;
Loathing pretence, he did with cheerful will
What others talked of, while their hands were still."

WHITTIER—*Daniel Neall.*

"He was a man; take him for all in all,
I shall not look upon his like again."

SHAKESPEARE—*Hamlet I, 2.*

"None knew thee but to love thee,
None named thee but to praise."

FITZ-GREEN HALLECK—*Death of J. R. Drake.*

"For his bounty,
There was no winter in't; an autumn 'twas,
That grew the more by reaping."

SHAKESPEARE, *Ant. and Cleo. V, 2.*

PETER COOPER.

A century ago our country was just emerging out of the gloom of the long struggle for independence; prosperity was returning; the Constitution had been ratified; President Washington was in the first year of his administration, with the seat of the national government at New York, then a rural city of 30000 inhabitants; the site of the Cooper Union and all these miles of streets and houses above Chambers street were orchards and cornfields with farmhouses and country residences; around the Battery and Bowling green, and on Pearl and Wall streets, were the homes of the wealthy.

President Washington lived on Broadway near Rector street, Governor Clinton and Mayor Varick on Pearl, and Alexander Hamilton on Wall street.

There were no railroads yet, nor the telegraph; twenty years passed before steam ferry-boats crossed the river, thirty-five years before the city was lighted with gas; there was a theatre in John street, and several newspapers were published; Columbia College was the only institution of higher learning, and the Public School System was far in the future.

Such was the city of New York, when, on the 12th day of February, 1791, Peter Cooper was born.

His father was John Cooper, who had done good service during the Revolution, retiring at its close with the rank of Lieutenant, and resuming his peaceful occupation of hatter in Little Dock street, now Water street, Coenties Slip, close by the fur store of John Jacob Astor from whom he bought beaver skins to make into hats.

His mother was Margaret, the daughter of Alderman John Campbell, who had served as Quartermaster in the Continental army. She was born on the spot where St. Paul's church now stands, where her father carried on his business of potter and tilemaker.

Peter was the fifth of nine children, two daughters and seven sons, and was named by his father after the Apostle, in the belief that "the boy would come to something." As soon as he was old enough he was taken into the shop, as his brothers had been before him, to learn his father's trade. He used to tell long years afterwards, that his "head just reached to the top of the table," when he was set at plucking rabbit skins, and by the time he was fifteen years of age, he had learned the hatter's business thoroughly; often when he came into our classes and told us of his early life, he would say that he "learned to make every part of a hat."

Of schooling he received very little, not only because his father was poor, and the boy's labor was a help to the family, but because from the delicacy of his constitution he could not

endure the confinement of school, and he only attended for one year, during half the day, learning a little arithmetic in in addition to reading and writing.

His father had but little success in business, which he changed frequently, removing to Peekskill, Catskill, Brooklyn and Newburg, now at brewing, again resuming his old trade of hat-making, and even for a time trying brick-making.

In all these changes Peter accompanied and assisted his father, and so the time passed until his seventeenth year, when, with his father's consent, he came back to his native city to begin life for himself.

He brought with him a saving of $10 which he was induced to invest in a lottery ticket, and lost his money, but gained a precious experience; ever after he avoided what is one of the curses of our time, speculation.

He went from shop to shop looking for employment, and at last came to the carriage shop of Burtis and Woodward, at the corner of Broadway and Chambers street, where the Stewart Building is to-day, at that time on the outskirts of the city.

He asked "Have you room for an apprentice?"

"Do you know anything about the business?" "No."

"Have you been brought up to work?"

He gave a short account of his past life.

"Is your father willing that you should learn this trade?"

"He has given me my choice of trades."

"If I take you will you stay with me and work out your time?"

He agreed, binding himself until the age of twenty-one, for twenty-five dollars a year and his board.

Of this period he said in after years: "I spent all my spare time in ornamental carving, in an upper room which my grandmother gave me for this purpose on Broadway. This was my occupation instead of walking the streets or going to places of public resort, as did other apprentices of my age."

At that time "not a single free school, either by day or night, existed," but during his apprenticeship he found a teacher, who for a small fee taught him arithmetic and other branches in the evening, and by constant study, deep interest and close observation of men and things all his life long, he acquired a degree of knowledge, which many learned in the schools never attain to, but to the last he deeply regretted his lack of early training.

During his apprenticeship he had made a machine for mortising hubs, and had shown so much ability and devotion to the interest of his masters, that when his time was out, they offered to advance the money to set him up in business for himself, but he declined, for he had resolved *never to be in debt.*

If all young men entering life would adopt this resolution of "their friend and well wisher," as he described himself, what bankrupts, what broken hearts would be spared!

Upon leaving the carriage business Mr. Cooper went to work in a woolen factory at Hempstead, L. I., for one dollar and fifty cents a day.

He soon devised and patented an improved cloth-shearing machine, which during the war of 1812 obtained a wide sale, for all commerce with England being suspended, the American manufacture of cloth flourished, enabling Peter Cooper to sell his machines faster than he could turn them out. It is interesting to note that one of the first men to whom he sold his machines was Matthew Vassar, the founder of Vassar College.

He soon had five hundred dollars laid by, and his prospects were bright; love was shedding its rosy light over his life, for at Hempstead lived the maiden who subsequently became his wife.

Learning that his father was in trouble and under the pressure of debt, he visited the family, then living at Newburg, applying his little savings to the payment of the most pressing debts and arranging for the settlement of the rest, thus saving his father from bankruptcy.

As we review his long life, rounded out to almost a century, we are forcibly reminded that it is written: "Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee."

Peter Cooper took pride and pleasure all his life in the knowledge that neither he nor his father had ever failed in business. And it is a great word, for during his long business career ten great panics swept over the country.

On December 22nd, 1813, at the age of twenty-two, Mr. Cooper married Miss Sarah Bedel, in her twenty-first year.

In the words of James Parton: "There never was a happier marriage than this. To old age he never sat near her without holding her hand in his. He never spoke to her nor of her without some tender epithet. He attributed the great happiness of his life and most of his success to her admirable qualities. He used to say that she was 'the day-star, the solace, and the inspiration' of his life. She seconded every good impulse of his benevolence, and made the fulfillment of his great scheme possible by her wise and resolute economy."

Six children were born unto them, four of whom died in childhood. The two surviving are the Hon. Edward Cooper and Mrs. Abram S. Hewitt (Sarah Amelia Cooper).

We have in Mr. Cooper's own words, a pleasant picture of their early housekeeping: "In early life, when I was first married, I found it necessary to rock the cradle, while my wife prepared our frugal meals. This was not always convenient in my busy life, and I conceived the idea of making a cradle that would be made to rock by mechanism. I did so, and enlarging upon my first idea, I arranged the mechanism for keeping off the flies, and playing a music-box for the amusement of the baby! This cradle was bought of me afterwards by a delighted pedlar, who gave me his whole stock in trade for the exchange and the privilege of selling the patent in the State of Connecticut."

The peace of 1815 put a stop to the American cloth manufacture, it being impossible to compete with England in that field, and Mr. Cooper tried a new business—cabinet-making. He followed this for one year only, when he bought a grocery store where the Bible House now stands, opposite to the site of the Union. He soon did a thriving business. His purchase included a twenty years' lease of two houses and six lots, and he built four large frame dwelling houses on the vacant lots.

We see him, in fancy, in those days, seventy years ago, a tall young man, with lovely brown eyes and auburn hair, standing at the door of his shop at the close of the busy day, looking away over fields lying in the light of the setting sun. At intervals he hears from the rooms above the sound of his musical cradle, or his wife's low voice in lullaby, and he thinks of his loved ones, of his business, of his boyhood with its struggles, and of the future. Before him lies a strip of land, at the junction of the "Old Middle" and the "Boston" roads, of which he has just bought a lot, for he believes that this will be a desirable spot when the fast growing city shall have spread so far northward, and as his thoughts go out into the future, those fields and lots vanish, houses and shops and busy streets are around him, and before him rises a massive pile—his creation—crowded with eager young men seeking that useful knowledge, that training of mind and hand, which shall make them skillful mechanics, useful citizens, good men.

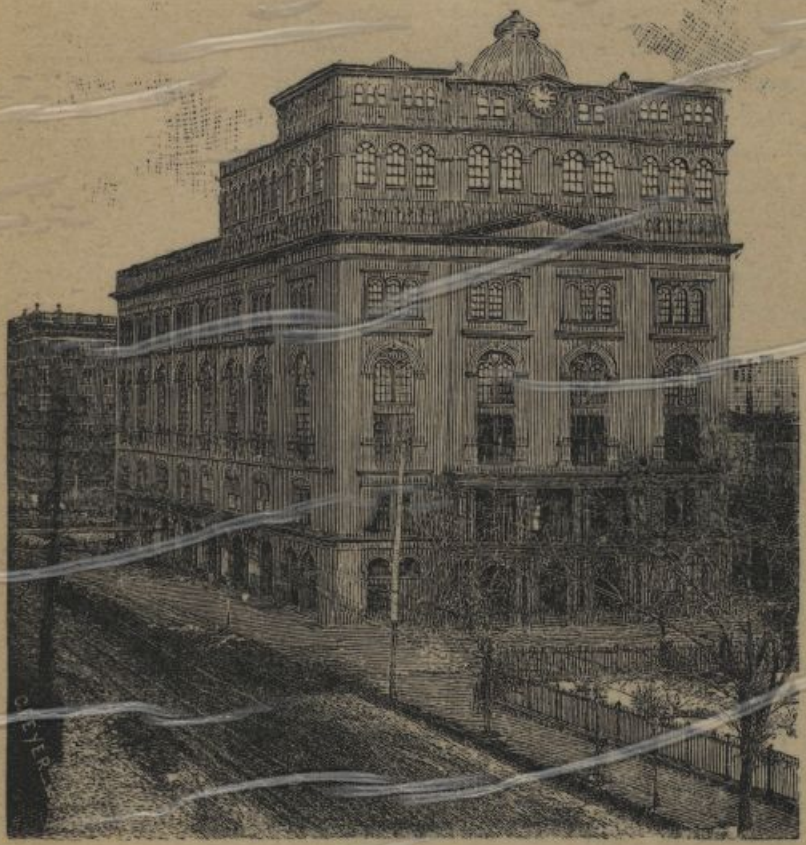
Mr. Cooper's mind had a strong inventive bent; he introduced improvement into every business in which he engaged, and in 1823, when the question was under discussion, as to the best motive power to be used upon the Erie Canal, then in process of construction, he made the experiment of employing an endless chain for the purpose. Posts, with rollers over which the endless chain passed, were set up along the East River from Eighth street to Twenty-sixth street, where Bellevue Hospital now stands, a water wheel at the Eighth street end propelling the chain.

To rouse public interest the boat was run for ten days, Governor Clinton being one of the first passengers, and Hamilton Fish, then a lad of fifteen years, still survives to tell the story of the trip.

One day when Mr. Cooper had kept his grocery about a year, his old friend, John Vreeland, the hardware merchant, passed, and told him of a large glue factory for sale up on the "Old Middle Road," as Fourth avenue was then called.

He went and looked at the property, on Fourth avenue between Thirty-first and Thirty-fourth streets, where the Park Avenue Hotel stands to-day, and bought it, with a twenty-one years' lease, for $2,000, his entire savings. He soon sold his grocery and devoted himself to his new business. At that time nearly all the glue was imported from Ireland and sold at a high price. Mr. Cooper studied the subject and experimented until he was able to make a better quality at a lower

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COOPER UNION—FROM THE SOUTH.

price, persevering until he produced the best article in the market, and he soon had nearly the entire glue business of the country in his hands.

Industry and economy are the secret of his success; for twenty years he was his own bookkeeper, clerk and salesman, going to the factory at dawn to light the fires, and spending his evenings at home, posting his books, writing, and reading to his family.

By his success in the glue business, Mr. Cooper laid the foundation of his fortune. Now indeed, "the boy had come to something." He had grown to be one of the most extensive business men of the country, with unlimited credit and surplus capital to invest in large enterprises.

In 1828 he was induced by two plausible gentlemen to make such an investment, namely, to unite with them in the purchase of three thousand acres of land within the city limits of Baltimore for $105,000. When the time came for the partners to pay their shares, it was found that Mr. Cooper was the only one who had any funds, and he finally acquired the whole property by buying out his partners.

This purchase occasioned Mr. Cooper's interest in the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, and led to his construction of the first American locomotive, about which he says: "When I first purchased the property it was in the midst of a great excitement created by a promise of the rapid completion of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, which had been commenced by a subscription of five dollars per share. In the course of the first year's operation they had spent more than the five dollars per share. But the road had to make so many short turns in going around points of rocks that they found they could not complete the road without a much larger sum than they had supposed would be necessary; while the many short turns in the road seemed to render it entirely useless for locomotive purposes. The principal stockholders had become so discouraged that they said they would not pay any more, and would lose all they had already paid in. After conversing with them, I told them that if they would hold on a little while I would put a small locomotive on the road, which I thought would demonstrate the practibility of using steam engines on the road, even with all the short turns in it. I built a small engine for that purpose, put it upon the road, and invited the stockholders to witness the experiment. After a good deal of trouble and difficulty in accomplishing the work, the stockholders came, thirty-six men were taken into a car, with six men on the locomotive, which carried its own fuel and water, and having to go up hill eighteen feet to a mile, and turn all the short turns around the points of rocks, we succeeded in making the thirteen miles, on the first passage out, in one hour and twelve minutes, and we returned from Ellicott's Mills to Baltimore in fifty-seven minutes. This locomotive was built to demonstrate that cars could be drawn around short curves, beyond anything believed at that time to

be possible. The success of this locomotive also answered the question of the possibility of building railroads in a country scarce of capital, and with immense stretches of very rough country to pass, in order to connect commercial centres, without the deep cuts, the tunneling and the leveling which short curves might avoid. My contrivance saved this road from bankruptcy."

In the same year, 1830, not being able readily to dispose of his three thousand acres of land, Mr. Cooper determined to go into the manufacture of charcoal iron. He says: "In my efforts to make iron, I had to begin by burning the wood growing upon the spot into charcoal, and in order to do that I erected large kilns, twenty-five feet in diameter, twelve feet high, circular in form, hooped around with iron at the top, arched over so as to make a tight place in which to put the wood, with single bricks left out in different places in order to smother the fire out when the wood was sufficiently burned. After having burned the coal in one of these kilns perfectly, and believing the fire entirely smothered out, we attempted to take the coal out of the kiln; but when we had got it about half-way out, the coal itself took fire, and the men after carrying water for some time to extinguish it, gave up in despair. I then went myself to the door of the kiln to see if anything more could be done, and just as I entered the gas exploded and enveloped me in a sheet of flame. I had to run some ten feet to get out, and in doing so, my eyebrows and whiskers were burned, and my fur hat was scorched down to the body of the fur. I seemed to be literally blown out by the explosion, and I narrowly escaped with my life."

Soon afterwards Mr. Cooper sold out to some Boston capitalists who formed the Canton Iron Company. He took a large part of his pay in stock at $45 a share, which rising rapidly in value, he was able to sell at $230 a share.

He continued to experiment in the manufacture of iron, building a rolling and wire mill in New York City, where he first successfully used anthracite coal in "puddling" iron.

In 1839 Mr. Cooper became a member of the Public School Society, and when this was superseded by the Board of Education, he was appointed a Commissioner. In these positions he was brought into contact with friends of education and practical teachers and the experience which he gained was an excellent preparation for the execution of his great purpose, helping him to systematize and perfect his plans.

On April 14th, 1840, he was elected a member of the Board of Aldermen, for the 17th ward, having previously served as an Assistant Alderman for the 12th ward, in 1820, 1829 and 1830. He took his seat on May 12th, 1840 and was appointed on the two standing committees of "Arts, Science and Schools" and "Finance." He was also on the Special Joint Committee on the Croton Aqueduct, then about half completed, and on the committee to prepare and issue an address to the

people of the State on Municipal grievances. Mr. Cooper advocated many municipal reforms, especially in the police and fire departments, favored home rule for New York City, and opposed the encroachments of monopolies.

While thus faithfully performing his duties in the Public School Society and the Board of Aldermen, Mr. Cooper was steadily enlarging his glue and iron business.

Through the growth of the city the sites of his factories had become too valuable for that purpose, and upon the expiration of the lease he removed the glue factory to Maspeth Avenue, Brooklyn.

In 1845 the iron works were also removed to Trenton, N. J., where a large rolling mill was erected. Here wrought iron beams for fire-proof buildings were first rolled.

Solicitude about his cherished object, the Cooper Union, led to the production of this important feature of modern architecture. Finding when about to begin work that suitable iron beams could not be obtained, he determined to make them himself, and he did.

Soon afterwards three large blasting furnaces were put up at Phillipsburg, near Easton, Pa., and in 1873, the year of the great panic, in a letter to President Grant, suggesting remedial legislation, Mr. Cooper could say: "Having been myself a working man through a long and laborious life, I feel for their condition and would gladly better it, if I could. At present, I believe, there are not less than a thousand persons depending for their bread on the business, carried on within the circle of our family. Thus far we have been able to keep two rolling mills running, and also two mills for the manufacture of wire and springs, besides giving employment to some two hundred persons in the manufacture of glue, oil and isinglass. We have four blast furnaces now blown out for the want of sale for the iron they would produce. The mining of ore for these furnaces must soon stop, unless the furnaces can be put in blast. No one can contemplate the continuance of the present state of things, without a feeling of horror at the prospect."

These sentences show the workingman's friend, and incidentally, how extensive the business, into which he had taken his son and son-in-law, had grown.

In 1854, the New York, Newfoundland and London Telegraph Company, was incorporated with Mr. Cooper as President, and in 1856 all its privileges were transferred to the Atlantic Telegraph Company, formed with a capital of $1,750,000 for the purpose of laying a cable across the Atlantic Ocean. Speaking of Mr. Cooper's share in that work, the *Electrical Review*, says: "To him, more than to any of his associates, is due the successful laying of the Atlantic Cable."

The story of the difficulties, failures, and final success of this grandest achievement of modern science and enterprise reads like a romance, and Mr. Cooper, in his simple characteristic sentences, thus narrates it.

"After one form of difficulty after another had been surmounted, we found that more than ten years had passed before we got a cent in return, and we had been spending money the whole time. The first cable laid across the Gulf of St. Lawrence, costing some three or four hundred thousand dollars, was lost through the seeming determination of the captain of the ship that towed our vessel across the Gulf, to have his own way, in opposition to the directions of Mr. Buchanan, who directed him to keep a certain flag in sight as far as he could see it, in connection with a certain mark on the top of a mountain, which was visible nearly half-way across the Gulf."

Two years passed before another cable was manufactured and successfully laid.

"The great question then came up, what could we do about an ocean cable? After getting a few subscriptions here, which did not amount to much, we sent Mr Field across the ocean, to see if he could get the balance of the subscriptions in England; he succeeded, to the astonishment of almost everybody, because we had been set down as crazy people, spending our money as if it had been water. Mr. Field succeeded in getting the amount wanted, and in contracting for a cable. It was put on two ships, which were to meet in mid ocean. They did meet, joined the two ends of the cable, and laid it down successfully. We brought our end to Newfoundland, where we received over it some four hundred messages. Very soon after it started, however, we found it began to fail, and to grow weaker and weaker, until it could no longer be understood.

It so happened that the few messages we received over the cable were important to the English Government, for it had arranged to transport a large number of soldiers from Canada to China, in the war with the Chinese, and just before the transports were to make sail a telegram came stating that peace had been declared. This inspired the English people with confidence in our project. But, as I said, the whole thing was here believed to be a humbug. At a meeting in the Chamber of Commerce, a member arose, and openly declared that, in his belief, no messages had been sent at all. Mr. Cunard, however, arose and said 'that the gentleman did not know what he was talking about, and had no right to say what he had; that he (Mr. Cunard) had sent messages himself, and received answers thereto.' Mr. Cunard was a positive witness; he had been on the spot, and the objector was effectually silenced in his attempt to cast ridicule on men whose efforts, if unsuccessful, were at least worthy of praise.

We succeeded in getting another cable, but when we had laid it about half-way over, we lost that as well. Then the project seemed hopeless. We thought for a long time, that our money was all lost. The matter rested for two years before anything was done. We had spent so much money already, it was like pulling teeth out of Roberts and Taylor to get any more out of them. But we got enough to send Mr. Field out

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again. When Mr. Field arrived in England they laughed at him for thinking of getting up another cable. They said they thought the thing was dead enough and buried deep enough in the bottom of the ocean to satisfy anybody. But Mr. Field was not satisfied. Finally he got hold of an old Quaker friend who was very rich, and so electrified him that he put $300,000 or $400,000 into it to lay another cable, and in fourteen days after Mr. Field had obtained that man's name, we had the whole amount subscribed. The second cable was made, put down and worked successfully. We then went out to see if we could take up the lost cable. The remainder was on board the ship. The cable was found, picked up and joined to the rest—and this wonder of the world was accomplished. I think that feat is not surpassed by any other human achievement. The cable was taken out of water two and a half miles deep, in mid ocean. It was pulled up three times before it was saved. They got it up just far enough to see it, when it would go down, and they had to do the work over again. They used up all their coal, and spent ten or twelve days in 'hooking' for the cable before it was finally caught. But they succeeded, the two ends of the cable were joined, and then we had two complete cables across the ocean. On taking up the first cable, the cause of its failure was discovered. It originated in the manufacture of the cable. In passing it into the vat, where it was intended to lie under water all the time, until put aboard the ship, the workmen neglected to keep the water at all times over the cable, and on one occasion, when the sun shone very hotly down into this vat where the cable was laying uncovered, its rays melted the gutta percha, so that the copper wires inside sank down against the outer covering. I have a piece of the cable which shows just how it occurred. The first cable that was laid would have been a perfect success, if it had not been for that error in manufacturing it. The copper wire sagged down against the outside covering, and there was just a thin layer of gutta percha to prevent it from coming into contact with the water. In making the first cables, their philosophy was not so well understood as it is now; when the cable began to fail they increased the power of the battery; and it is supposed that a spark of electricity coming in contact with water, the current passed off into the water.

After the two ocean cables had been laid successfully, it was found necessary to have a second cable across the Gulf of St. Lawrence. Our delays had been so trying and unfortunate in the past, that none of the stockholders, with the exception of Mr. Field, Mr. Taylor, Mr. Roberts and myself, would take any interest in the matter. We had to get the money by offering bonds, which we had power to do by charter; and these were offered at fifty cents on the dollar. Mr. Field, Mr. Roberts, Mr. Taylor and myself were compelled to take up the principal part at that rate in order to get the necessary funds. We had to do the business through the Bank of Newfoundland, and the

bank would not trust the Company, but drew personally on me. I told them to draw on the Company, but they continued to draw on me, and I had to pay the drafts or let them go back protested. I was often out ten or twenty thousand dollars in advance, in that way, to keep the thing going. After the cable became a success, the stock rose up to ninety dollars per share, at which figure we sold out to an English Company. That proved to be the means of saving us from loss. The work was finished at last, and I never have regretted it, although it was a terrible time to go through."

Mr. Cooper also became President of the North American Telegraph Association, which at one time controlled more than half the lines in the United States.

But these magnificent manufacturing and commercial enterprises were only means to an end—preparation for his life work—the founding of the Cooper Union.

He had bought the first parcel of the ground thirty years before, and from time to time, as pieces of the land were offered for sale, he bought them, until now he owned the whole block; he also found that he possessed about $700,000 above the capital invested in his glue and iron business, and so, having secured his chosen site, acquired the means to build, and fully matured his plans, he began the execution of his life long purpose, in 1854, by laying the corner stone, within which was placed a scroll with the inscription: "The great object that I desire to accomplish by the erection of this institution, is to open the avenues of scientific knowledge to the youth of our city and country, and so unfold the volume of nature, that the young may see the beauties of creation, enjoy its blessings, and learn to love the Author from whom cometh every good and perfect gift."

The building rose steadily under Mr. Cooper's personal supervision, a massive structure of brick, stone and iron, in the Roman style, six stories high, and "on the 29th of April, 1859," he "executed a deed in fee simple of the property known as the Cooper Institute without reservation of any kind, to six trustees, upon the conditions specified in the Act of the Legislature authorizing the gift to be made, 'that the above mentioned and described premises, together with the appurtenances and the rents, issues, income and profits thereof, shall be forever devoted to the instruction and improvement of the inhabitants of the United States in practical science and art.'"

On July 1st, 1859, the School of Science and Art was opened, when, after the lecture by Dr. Draper, introductory to the Course of Scientific Instruction, Mr. Cooper, being called upon by the audience, made the following remarks:

"It is, my friends, at all times difficult to speak with strict propriety of matters pertaining to one's self.

The occasion that has brought us together, in order to commence the regular course of instruction in this building, is

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GALLERY IN WOMAN'S ART SCHOOL.

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one upon which my mind has dwelt with long and anxious hope.

It is now my privilege and joy to welcome the youth of this city and country to the benefits and privileges of this Institution.

It will be my friends, entirely out of my power to give you any clear idea of the labor and efforts that have been required to obtain the means necessary for the erection of this building—a building now entirely devoted, with all its rents and revenues of every name and nature, to the advancement of science and art.

This building has scarcely been absent from my thoughts for a single day for nearly thirty years. I have labored for it, by night and by day, with an intensity of desire that can never be explained.

It is now my fervent hope that the youth of my native city and country will constantly throng these halls, with eager efforts, to gain that kind of useful knowledge which is needed to make them wise, good, and useful to themselves and to their country.

I trust that all the youth of our city and country, through all coming time, will realize that this Institution has been organized for their special use and improvement; and I trust that they will rally around and protect it, and make it like a city set on a hill that cannot be hid.

You, my young friends, are now more deeply interested to care for, and to use this building wisely and well, than I by possibility can be.

My time, in the course of nature, is rapidly drawing to a close; while you may have many long years to enjoy the benefits of this Institution, or to suffer the consequences of a neglect to improve the opportunities here offered, as this building has been erected solely for your advancement in science and art.

I trust that the time will come when the knowledge and application of science and art will elevate the hearts of men above the tinseled toys and groveling pursuits that now so effectually engross their thoughts.

Science, my friends, is a means to develop the laws and purposes of Deity.

It is the means placed within our reach, that God has given to unveil and bring to light a great and glorious purpose; an adaptation of means to ends, running through and connecting the movements of every particle of matter throughout all the vast fabric of creation.

Such a purpose, in the mind of Infinite Goodness, could not do less than to organize, individualize, and immortalize the innumerable minds with power to receive and communicate happiness to all eternity. Science has given to man a telescopic power that enables him to penetrate depths of space; to measure the distance, diameter and density of all those planets

that float with such majestic splendor around the heavens. With the microscopic power, man is enable to penetrate the minutiæ of creation, bringing into view wonders and beauties that language cannot describe.

With mechanical powers, we are permitted to transport ourselves around the world, as on the wings of the wind.

With the help of mathematical and chemical powers, man is enabled to dissolve all known substances, and, as it were, to take the world to pieces, selecting those parts best suited for his uses.

With the aid of science he guides the running brook, and causes it to flow in living streams, at his command, into every room within his dwelling.

With the aid of science man penetrates the bowels of the earth, and drags from its silent depths those mineral products that beautify and bless the world. He rends the solid rock, and shapes it into forms of use and beauty.

He dissolves the mineral coal into a gas that floats beneath our streets to every dwelling, ever ready to burst forth in beauteous light at our command.

In order to show the power of science to control the electric fire, I will ask you not to be alarmed if a momentary darkness be allowed to come over us, in order to show not only the beauty of returning light, but the power to control the elements that the Almighty has entrusted to our use. *

With these powers, it is possible for us to send our messages around the world with the speed of lightning.

It should never be forgotten that the universe moves in obedience to laws so wise and good as never to require to be either altered, amended, or revoked.

It is the very power to perceive, understand, and apply those laws that elevates man above the level of the brute.

It is the proper business of true science and philosophy to work in harmony with these laws.

These laws, my friends, have forever connected health with temperance, and peace with virtue.

For one, I indulge the hope that science will finally unfold the mystery of our being and show the law of our progress written upon all the varied leaves of creation, demonstrating the wisdom, the power, and the goodness of that God who has given immortality to man."

In the previous year, November 26th, 1858, before the building was completed, Mr. Cooper had addressed the pupils of the Grammar Schools of this city, assembled in the Hall of the Cooper Union (now the Reading Room) in these words:

"My children: For one, I envy not the man who can stand unmoved in the presence of such a scene as this.

* At this instant the gas was turned off, and the 200 burners were extinguished; they were immediately lighted again by the electric sparks from a Ruhmkorf induction apparatus.

What sight is there in all the wide range of human observation so well calculated to stir the deepest feelings of our hearts with profound anxiety for the future welfare of this vast company of the young?

Who is there that has ever trod the slippery paths of youth that would not gladly place a lamp in their path, and a light to their feet to guide them amidst the dazzling danger that will beset them on every hand?

Who is there, or where is the person, who could stand unmoved, or look with indifference, and see a company like this just taking their passage to make a voyage round the world?

How anxiously would each and all inquire after the safety and soundnsss of the vessel in which they were about to embark!

How anxiously would all inquire as to what provision they had made to meet and overcome the dangers that they are sure to encounter on the passage! If, my young friends, I should now assure you that the smallest child within the sound of my voice has already entered on a voyage more difficult and dangerous than to make a passage round the world, *how astonished would you be!*

Yes, my young friends, I can assure you that each one of us is already upon the great ocean of life; and we are compelled, by our very existence, to make our passage, not only around the world, but through it, which is a much more difficult task.

To make this voyage in safety, we require a sound, strong, and substantial vessel—by which I mean, a sound, strong, and healthy body—one whose timbers are not weakened by the gnawing worms of excess.

Perhaps you may not be aware how important it is to put a sheathing of copper on ships to prevent the little worms from entering and eating out their strength, so that the vessel will not break in pieces on an open sea. So it will be with us if we do not sheath our little vessels with true knowledge, by which alone we can keep out bad passions and bad habits, that will eat out our strength, and leave us a miserable wreck on the shore of life.

I said we need a healthy body in order to make a safe, comfortable passage through life. And I hope we may, one and all, remember that

> 'Health consists with temperance alone;
> 'And peace, O Virtue, peace is all thine own!

We need on this voyage, a compass, a quadrant, chronometer, barometer, and chart, with knowledge sufficient to use them with skill, so as to clear those rocks and whirlpools of passion that have engulfed so many, whose eyes, like yours, have sparkled with brightness and beauty, and whose faces, like yours, have beamed with hope and expectation of future happiness through life.

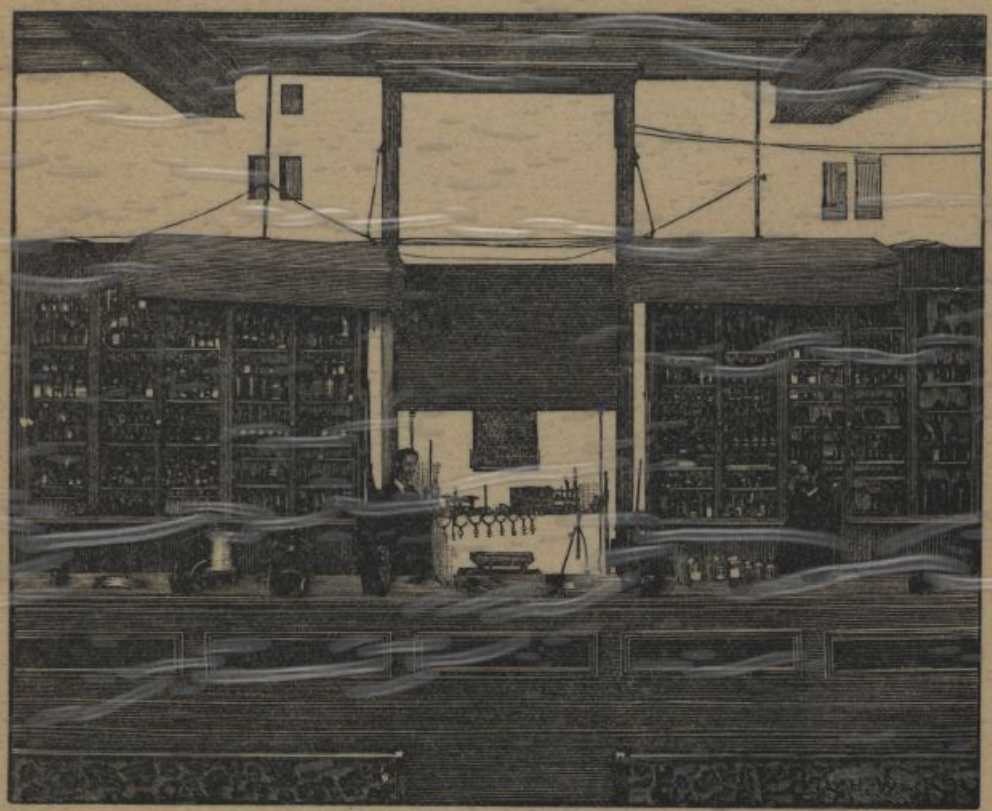
Yes, my young friends, we all need to watch our compass, with its trembling needle to guide us in the path of truth and duty, and to strengthen us with a resolute determination to give the world an equivalent, in some form of useful labor, for all we consume in it, and thus to fulfill that important requirement, to owe no man anything but the good we can do. You will need to use constantly your compass, chronometer, barometer, and chart,—by which I mean the knowledge you now have the opportunity to acquire, to enable you to steer your course in safety, and find out what you are, and where you are drifting on the great ocean of life. You will need, also, your spy-glass of perception and calculation, to enable you to see dangers at a distance, as well as to discover and ascertain what there is in reality beautiful and good to be obtained. The mariner requires a barometer—an instrument so extremely sensitive that it measures the weight of the atmosphere, and thus enables him to prepare for storms that might otherwise destroy his vessel.

The barometer is a beautiful instrument; as an emblem it shows an all-surrounding pressure or atmosphere, through which comes that still small voice that speaks to the intelligent heart, giving ideas of what is just and right, and our barometer is to be watched with care, and used on all occasions. That still small voice is constantly telling us to do unto others as we would that others should do unto us. This precept is for us the true barometer of life. It will, if wisely used, enable us to measure and weigh the pressure of those surrounding circumstances that have made us to differ from every other human being. A true knowledge of the power that circumstances are constantly exerting is calculated to inspire us with charity for the faults and follies of those around us. It was this knowledge which enabled Christ to say of His enemies, 'Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.' It is the power to use this compass, this chronometer, quadrant, and chart—I mean the power to follow the glorious example of Christ, that will enable you, like Him when a child, to grow in knowledge and in stature, and in favor with God and man.

He, by doing always those things that are well pleasing to His Father and our Father—by doing always to others as He would that others should do unto Him—was enabled to overcome all evil; and, although tempted in all points as we are yet He lived without sin.

It is our highest wisdom to follow His lovely example, by avoiding all that is wrong, and by doing what good we can in the world. It is our privilege always to steer our course by the compass of truth and duty. It is this power in man to apply all mechanical and chemical combinations, by which it is made our duty, as it is our highest interest to subject the earth, the air and the ocean to our use—it is this mighty power, rightly and wisely applied, that dignifies and elevates man

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above the level of the brute, and shows him to be, in reality, but 'a little lower than the angels.'

What could have been done for us more than to give a spark of His own immortality, and to give us the world and all that in it is, and only require of us that we should keep, subdue, and hold dominion, in order to find a good in the right and wise application and use of everything throughout all the great garden of the world? To do this, you will require all the knowledge and all the wisdom that is possible to be obtained. To aid you in the pursuit of knowledge, the Board of Education has invited you here, with all the evidences of your progress and skill, that you may stimulate each other to improve the opportunity you now enjoy to prepare for a safe, useful, happy and prosperous passage through life. Then will the star of hope shine with ever brightening splendor on our way, showing the wisdom, the power, and the goodness of the Father of all, by connecting this, our greatest virtue, with our greatest bliss, and by making

'Our own bright prospect to be blest,
Our strongest motive to assist the rest.'

The Committee of the Board of Education have conferred on me the honor to present to you the rewards of merit. They are rewards provided for those who have excelled in any of the various departments of useful knowledge.

Knowledge, my young friends, is a tremendous power for good or for evil—for good, when rightly and wisely applied to the varied uses and purposes of life; with it you may unlock the great storehouse of nature, and draw from its inexhaustible fountain all that is good for food, and pleasant to the eye, and calculated to make us wise.

I trust the day will come when the halls of this building will be constantly thronged by thousands in the eager pursuit of knowledge—by those who will here catch the inspiration of truth in all its native power and beauty, and find in it an inexpressible pleasure to spread its transforming influence around the world. Then will my fondest hopes be realized, and I shall rejoice that my labor has not been in vain.

If it were possible, my young friends, I would write such a resolution in letters of light on every heart. I would impress it as the safest and surest means by which to secure for ourselves, and those we love, health, peace, and competence through life. To strengthen and give force to such a resolution, I will ask you to look, as you walk the streets, at the many poor and wretched, whose trembling limbs are begging bitter bread from charity's cold hand. I will ask you to guard yourselves against such a terrible misfortune. I will urge you to avoid those useless and injurious habits of smoking and chewing tobacco, and drinking liquor; habits that are now taxing a large part of the youth of our city to an amount sufficient (if the sum were wisely invested) to secure to each

in old age, a house and home, so indispensable to the happiness of all. He declared an important truth who said: 'The man who consecrates his hours by vigorous efforts and an honest aim, at once draws the string of life and death, and walks with nature in the paths of peace.'"

In February, 1860, Abraham Lincoln made his famous speech in the great hall of the Union and those walls have since resounded to many a patriotic and benevolent appeal.

In January, 1862, in a letter to President Lincoln, Mr. Cooper said: "The maintenance of our Union of States in all its integrity and completeness is, to my mind, the nation's pearl of great price, that can never be abandoned while there are life and power to preserve and defend it."

This sentiment awoke responsive echoes in the hearts of many young men who left the halls of study for the camp and field.

From the start Mr. Cooper's hope that "the halls of this building would be continually thronged by thousands in eager pursuit of knowledge" was realized. It supplied a great need and the class for whose benefit it was designed hastened to avail themselves of it. From year to year it has extended the sphere of its usefulness and has sent out from its class-rooms and studios more than 50,000 young men and women, trained in mind, and eye and hand.

In 1882 another story was added. Soon afterwards the foundation showed signs of weakness; this was thoroughly remedied, and extensive alterations to strengthen and improve the building have been made by the children of Mr. Cooper at a cost exceeding $300,000, and to-day it stands firm as a rock.

The purpose, the scope, and the *needs* of the Cooper Union are told by the Trustees in their last annual report, wherein they say: "When the Trustees proceeded to the execution of their duties, they laid down as the fundamental basis of their operations the following principles: First, that the details of the Institution in all the departments should be arranged with special reference to the intellectual wants and improvement of the working classes. And, second, that as far as might be consistent with the first principle, all interference with the plan or objects of other existing institutions in this city, should be avoided. Guided by these principles, the Trustees arrived at the following broad scheme as best calculated to instruct, elevate and improve the working classes of this city:

First.—Instruction in the branches of knowledge which are practically applied in their daily occupations, by which they support themselves and their families.

Second.—Instruction in the laws by which health is preserved and the sanitary conditions of families improved, in other words, in personal hygiene.

Third.—Instruction in social and political science, by virtue of which communities maintain themselves and nations progress in virtue, wealth and power.

Fourth.—Instruction addressed to the eye, the ear and the imagination, with a view to furnish a reasonable and healthy recreation to the working classes after the labors of the day.

* * * * * * * * *

So far as they have found it practicable within the means at their command, the Trustees have endeavored to execute the trust confided to them, with the assistance of the founder, who was one of their number for more than a quarter of a century, expending the revenues of the institution upon the following objects:

1. The maintenance during the day of an Art School for women, giving instruction to over three hundred pupils annually, and enabling a large number of young women to gain a livelihood in various congenial and respectable occupations.

2. To instruction for women in telegraphy, and in stenography and type-writing, whereby about one hundred young women have been annually qualified to gain an honorable livelihood.

3. The maintenance at night of schools in mathematics, drawing, mechanism, chemistry, geology and other branches of physical science useful and necessary for young men and women engaged in mechanical, artistic and manufacturing pursuits. The average attendance in these classes has exceeded two thousand persons. In connection with these classes the lectures have been so arranged as to admit a large number of persons who have desired to gain instruction in the special departments.

4. To the establishment and maintenance of a free reading room and reference library, open from 8 A. M. to 10 P. M., capacious enough to accommodate the very large number of readers who resort to this means of recreation and improvement. During the last ten years the reading-room has been opened on Sundays from noon until 9 P. M. with general approval.

5. To lectures given in the great hall on Saturday evening by men eminent in science, art and literature, upon subjects of general interest to the community. The attendance upon these lectures is always satisfactory, and usually all the seats, nearly two thousand in number, are filled by intelligent and appreciative audiences.

These five departments have absorbed the entire income of the institution. They could be enlarged to great advantage, but until additional endowment is provided, the Trustees are reluctantly compelled to reject as many applicants as they can admit to the several departments of instruction. * * * The Trustees would be glad to devote to the purposes of instruction all those portions of the building now rented, and the public interest requires that this desirable end should be accomplished as soon as possible, in order to meet the demand of applicants now rejected for lack of space and money to pay for additional teachers. To supply the rent which would thus be released

will require an endowment of $500,000. To meet the additional expense for instruction, at least $250.000 will be needed. The Trustees make these facts known in the hope that the additional endowment will be soon provided by the beneficence of enlightened donors who apppreciate the value of the work which the Cooper Institute is doing, and can greatly enlarge, for the benefit of the city of New York."

No figures can express the incalculable good which this noble institution has done, and yet it is well to look, on the one hand, at the amount of money which has been spent since its foundation, and on the other, at the thousands who have been benefited by it, aye, the hundreds of thousands to whom its beneficial influences has spread indirectly.

Therefore, inadequate as they are to represent the mental and moral gain, the following figures are given to show how much good can be done with money wisely and economically used :

The original cost of the Cooper Union building when conveyed to the Trustees	$ 630,000.00
Cost of reconstruction of foundation, &c	315,000.00
Total receipts from rents	1,023,810.97
Total receipts from donations	51,190.39
Total receipts from sundry other sources	188,525.39
Total aggregate receipts to Jan. 1, 1890	1,263,526.75
Total expenditures for carrying on the various departments, from 1859 to 1890 inclusive (32 years)	1,299,216.79
Total expenditures on building and education to Jan. 1st, 1890	2,244,216.79

On the 22nd day of December, 1863, Mr. and Mrs. Cooper celebrated their golden wedding, and we love to turn aside for a moment from the busy public life of our benefactor to his quiet home life, as he sits by the evening fire with the wife of his youth at his side, or smiles on the sports of his grandchildren.

In 1869, December 19th, the shadow of death fell across that happy home ; the companionship of fifty-six years was broken ; the partner of all his struggles, his hopes and fears, his trials and triumphs, was taken from him. It was a grievous affliction ; but full of the hope of immortality he looked forward to the time when he should meet her again in the land where "there shall be no more parting."

In 1874, on his 84th birthday, a beautiful tribute was offered Mr. Cooper in the form of a reception tendered by the Arcadian Club.

Many eminent in the professions and in public life, together with representatives from the Institute, met and congratulated him that night. In reply he said :

"For the gracious manner and kindly words in which you have made me welcome to your hospitable home, and more hospitable hearts, be so good as to accept my cordial thanks ;

none the less sincere, in that they come from a heart in which the pulsations of eighty-three years have not enfeebled the appreciation of deeds of generosity and kindness.

When the suggestion of the honor which you designed for me was communicated to me, I confess I was reluctant to accede to your wishes, because my acceptance seemed to imply a consciousness, on my part, of desert, which I did not feel; and my reluctance was only overcome by the assurance that the recognition which you desired to make of my life-long desire to do my duty to the city of my birth, and to my fellow-men, might be useful in helping others, and especially the young, to do their duty in a community in which so much depends upon the voluntary actions of its individual members.

If, then, I have done or accomplished anything, which really merits your good opinion, let me say at once, and for all, that I have found and received full compensation in the satisfaction which I have derived from the consciousness of duty performed; and that the experience of a long life enables me to say that money and efforts expended for the general good are a better paying investment than any possible expenditure for personal gratification. In looking back, however, over my life, I am compelled to make a remark, in which most aged persons will sympathize, and that is, how much I have seen come to pass, and how little I have been able to do in a long career, that cardinal rule which has been to render some equivalent to society, in some useful form of labor, for each day of my existence.

* * * * * * * * * * *

Measured by the achievements of the years I have seen, I am one of the oldest men who have ever lived; but I do not feel old, and I propose to give the recipe by which I have preserved my youth. I have always given a friendly welcome to new ideas, and I have endeavored not to feel too old to learn—and, thus, though I stand here with the snows of so many winters upon my head, my faith in human nature, my belief in the progress of man to a better social conditon, and especially my trust in the ability of men to establish and maintain self government, are as fresh and as young as when I began to travel the path of life.

While I have always recognized that the object of business is to make money in an honorable manner, I have endeavored to remember that the object of life is to do good. Hence I have been ready to engage in all new enterprises, and, without incurring debt, to risk the means which I had acquired in their promotion, provided they seemed to me calculated to advance the general good. This will account for my early attempt to perfect the steam engine, for my attempt to construct the first American locomotive, for my connection with the telegraph in a course of efforts to unite our country with the European world, and for my recent efforts to solve the problem of economical steam navagation on the canals; to all of which

you have so kindly referred. It happens to but few men to change the current of human progress, as it did to Watt, to Fulton, to Stephenson, and to Morse; but most men may be ready to welcome laborers to a new field of usefulness and to clear the road for their progress.

This I have tried to do, as well in the perfecting and execution of their ideas, as in making such provision as I my means have permitted for the proper education of the young mechanics and citizens of my native city, in order to fit them for the reception of new ideas, social, mechanical, and scientific; hoping thus to economize and expand the intellectual as well as the physical forces, and provide a larger fund for distribution among the various classes which necessarily make up the total of society.

I feel that nature has provided bountifully for the wants of all men, and that we need only knowledge, scientific, political, and religions, and self-control, in order to eradicate the evils under which society has suffered in all ages.

Let me say, then, in conclusion, that my experience in life has not dimmed my hopes for humanity; that my sun is not setting in clouds and darkness; but is going down cheerfully in a clear firmament lighted up by the glory of God, who should always be venerated and loved, as the infinite source and fountain of all Light—Life—Power—Wisdom, and Goodness.

I wish to add a word about the origin of the Cooper Union. It happened so long ago—my election to the Common Council—that I really cannot tell what year it was [laughter], but I remember meeting a gentleman of the Board then, who had just returned from France, and he was telling me what great advantage he derived from attending the Polytechnic Institute of Paris, an institute supported by the goverment. What interested me most was his remark that he found hundreds of young men attending that institute, living on a bare crust of bread a day to get the benefit of the lectures, and that representation brought home to me so forcibly my own wants when I was an apprentice, and had no opportunity to get what I most wanted, that I determined then, if I should ever be able to get the means, I would try to supply the want for my native city; and the institution you have so kindly alluded to, is the result of my labor in that direction."

In 1876 Mr. Cooper was nominated for the Presidency by the National Independent, or "Greenback" party, and although heartily endorsing the platform of the party he reluctantly, and *conditionally* accepted the nomination. It was with no selfish ambition that he allowed his name to go before the voters of his country, and his only regret at the result was that they rejected a policy which he believed for their good.

In 1879, upon his birthday, the University of New York conferred on him the degree of LL. D., and he then said: "My esteemed friend, the Chancellor, has brought me an

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honor that I have never sought. It is one that I am sure I never expected to obtain. As I have no scholastic attainments to entitle me to receive this honor, if I receive it at all it must be in recognition of a long laborious life spent in a course of efforts to found an institution that opens its doors at night and gives free instruction in science in its application to all the useful and necessary purposes of life. I find myself compelled to believe that science is a rule or law of God by which the movements of the material creation are rendered intelligible to man, and that science itself is nothing more or less than a knowledge of this law or rule, actually demonstrated by the experience of mankind. Believing this, I have given the labors of a long life to the advancement and diffusion of scientific knowledge, feeling assured that when Christianity itself comes to be felt in all its purity, power and force, it will then be found to be a simple system, a science, a rule of life to guide and regulate the actions of mankind."

During all these years Mr. Cooper continued to watch over and provide for his beloved Institute; he spent a part of every day within its walls. Well do we remember him as he stood before our classes uttering his words of encouragement and warning. How he used to enforce his precepts with quotations from the poets, especially his favorite Pope. No Commencement passed without his benign, cheerful face on the platform. He seemed to be always cheerful and happy, and in his ninetieth year he accounted for his continued bodily and mental vigor by saying: "I always find something to keep me busy; and to be doing something for the good of man, or to keep the wheels in motion is the best medicine one can take. I run up and down stairs here almost as easily as I did years ago, when I never expected that my term would run into the nineties. I have occasional twinges from the nervous shock and physical injury sustained from an explosion that occurred while I was conducting some experiments with nitrogen gas years ago. In other respects my days pass as painlessly as they did when I was a boy carrying a grocer's basket about the streets. It is very curious, but somehow, though I have none of the pains and troubles that old men talk about, I have not the same luxury of life—the same relish in the mere act of living—that I had then. Age is like babyhood come back again in a certain way. Even the memories of baby-life come back,—the tricks, the pranks, the boyish dreams, and things that I did not remember at forty or fifty years old I recollect vividly now. But a boy of ninety and a boy of nine are very different things, none the less. I never felt better in my life except for twinges occasioned by my nitrogen experiment. But still I hear a voice calling to me, as my mother often did, when I was a boy, 'Peter, Peter, it is about bed-time,' and I have an old man's presentiment that I shall be taken soon."

Mr. Lester gives a charming picture of the good old man, in his ninety-second year: "On one of the balmy evenings of

last autumn, I found my walk had led me by his house, and seeing him sitting near the window, I crossed the door sill and entered his familiar room on the first floor. It was a favored moment to see the real living Peter Cooper. He sat in perfect repose in his easy-chair looking away through the twilight, and his calm face appeared so serene I was half afraid I had disturbed him, and said so. 'Oh, no, no; sit down, I am glad you came in. Can you guess what I was thinking of? Well, when I am in one of those quiet reveries which we are all apt to indulge in at the close of the day after its work is done, and the curtains of night are being drawn so tenderly around us by the loving Father's hands, I recall many of the blessed things we have read years ago. Well, Pope's "Universal Prayer" came back to me a little while since, so fresh, and it struck me very forcibly. Will you let me go over it *aloud* and see if I have forgotten it?

Father of all! in every age,
In every clime adored,
By saint, by savage, and by sage,
Jehovah, Jove, or Lord!

Thou great First Cause, least understood,
Who all my sense confined
To know but this, that Thou art good,
And that myself am blind.

Yet gave me, in this dark estate,
To see the good from ill;
And binding nature fast in fate,
Left free the human will.

What conscience dictates to be done,
Or warns me not to do,
This, teach me more than hell to shun,
That, more than heaven pursue.

What blessings Thy free bounty gives,
Let me not cast away;
For God is paid when man receives,—
To enjoy is to obey.

Yet not to earth's contracted span
Thy goodness let me bound,
Or think Thee Lord alone of man,
When thousand worlds are round.

Let not this weak, unknowing hand
Presume Thy bolts to throw,
And deal damnation round the land
On each I judge Thy foe.

If I am right, Thy grace impart
Still in the right to stay;
If I am wrong, oh teach my heart
To find that better way!

Save me alike from foolish pride,
Or impious discontent,
At aught Thy wisdom has denied,
Or aught Thy goodness lent.

Teach me to feel another's woe,
To hide the fault I see;
That mercy I to others show,
That mercy show to me.

Mean though I am, not wholly so,
Since quickened by Thy breath;
Oh lead me wheresoe'er I go,
Through this day's life or death!

This day, be bread and peace my lot:
All else beneath the sun,
Thou know'st if best bestowed or not,
And let Thy will be done.

To Thee, whose temple is all space,
Whose altar, earth, sea, skies!
Our chorus let all Being raise!
All nature's incense rise!'

He spoke more and more earnestly, and as he went on, his voice grew tremulous with feeling, and large tears rolled from his glistening eyes down his smooth and still ruddy cheeks, and looking upward, he exclaimed, 'Oh, my dear friend, if everybody felt as Pope did when he wrote those words, what a world this would be!'"

Throughout his life Mr. Cooper took a hearty interest in the government of his country; he was a *good citizen.* He had written and printed many letters on finance and government which he now collected and published, January 1883, in a large 8vo volume of 400 pages, under the title:

"Ideas for a Science of Good Government, in Addresses, Letters and Articles on a Strictly National Currency, Tariff and Civil Service." By Hon. Peter Cooper, LL.D.

He dedicated it "To my children, grandchildren and to the pupils of Cooper Institute."

Early in 1883 he said to Rev. Robert Collyer: "I would be glad to have four more years of life given me, for I am anxious to make some additional improvements in Cooper Union, and then part of my life work would be complete. If I could only live four years longer I would die content."

But it was not to be. A cold, of which little was thought at first, grew worse; he had not the strength to throw it off, and on April 4th, 1883, he died, passing away quietly and painlessly. He had lived a life of purity and virtue, and "the end of that man is peace."

Universal was the sorrow when it became known that his familiar figure would never again be seen in the haunts of men; that his kind, old face with its snowy wreath of hair, would never again gladden the many who had learned to love him.

The funeral took place on Saturday, April 7th. Like his life it was simple and unostentatious, but ever memorable will be to us that gloomy day when we filed up the still church aisle, and took a last look at the calm face. A guard of honor

from our number stood beside the coffin, and all through the day a multitude from every rank in life moved slowly, sorrowfully by. A simple but touching tribute was rendered by the pupils of the Ladies' Art School, each of whom carried a single pure flower which she laid reverently upon the coffin.

The Rev. Robert Collyer, his friend and pastor, spoke affectionately of the departed, saying: "We gather about the dust of our dear friend to-day, and thank God for his life, I trust, more than we mourn his death, who are not bound to him by the tender ties of kinship and the home, to find a joy in our sorrow like the joy in harvest, and to say for him what he never felt free to say for himself after all these years of noble striving. He has fought a good fight; he has finished his course, he has kept the faith, and has proven himself a workman who needeth not to be ashamed now that the long day's work is done; for by pureness, by knowledge, by kindness, by love unfeigned, by word of truth, by the power of God, and by the armor of righteousness, on the right hand and on the left, he has now such reverence as is seldom won by any man in his own lifetime.

The man whose home was a more sacred shrine than any church we can name in our city; whose presence in the later years where men are most eager to be about their business, brought a courtesy and deference of air akin to that they used to show in the old time to princes, and whose name was held dear, even in the hamlets of misery and sin, and was spoken, as I know, by the poorest and most forlorn, with a tenderness which is seldom won by the priests of God; who had learned to feel no fear as he went about our streets, because the very roughs had become his guardians, and would have fallen into ranks about him in any danger, and held their lives in pawn for his safety; whose white head was indeed a crown of glory, because it was found in the way of righteousness, and whose presence wherever he went lay like a bar of sunshine across a dark and troubled day so that I have seen it light up some thousands of care-worn faces and send waves of sweet laughter rippling from heart to heart in a moment of time, as if they were saying, who looked on him, 'It cannot be so hard a world as we thought it was since Peter Cooper stays in it to give it his benediction.'

The man whose simplest speech in the Institute, touched with the hesitancy of more than fourscore and ten years, went to the heart more potently than the choicest eloquence of other men, and could never have been matched to his lovers and friends by any speech of a monarch from his throne, and who —all blessings rest on him for that also—entered as sweetly into the enjoyment of it and the joy, as we did who heard him; and yet never through the spirit which tarnishes such speech now and then in our great benefactors, and creates the suspicion that they may still be proud of their humility when they have shorn themselves of all other pride; but through the beautiful

innocence and simplicity which, ever since I knew him, was native to his heart, and clasping the latest years with the earliest, compelled us all to say, 'Of such is the kingdom of heaven.'"

Dr. Crosby also added his tribute, and concluded with the words: "What an example has been set by this life to our young men! How it shows to them what the true aim of life ought to be! What an example this life is to our wealthy men, to show that money obtained by honest industry and spent in benefitting mankind will never produce war between labor and capital, but will assuage all angry elements, and give universal peace! Oh, if our wealthy men were like Peter Cooper all classes would be satisfied, all commotions cease, and the community would be as near perfection—as near perfection in the pecuniary view—as it possibly could be on this earth."

At last the long procession moved down the great thoroughfare. Graduates, pupils of the schools and many others followed that hearse, from All Souls' Church down Fourth Avenue, past the Institute for which he had striven so long with hand and brain, Fourth street, Broadway, hushed and silent that afternoon. On every side drooped the lowered flags, and thousands of sincere mourners lined the long way.

He rests in a beautiful spot in Greenwood, and year by year as we make our pilgrimage in the early summer to that honored grave, strewn with the sweet flowers, it inspires only thoughts of thankfulness and hopefulness; for the example of a pure and noble life, and that following that example, our own lives may grow better.

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